Voices of Peace

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PEACE COLLEGE

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

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With thankfulness for freedom of the press—

With thankfulness for a new, bright dawn coming—

With thankfulness for the opportunity to share with countrymen and oppressed allies—

We dedicate this issue to our great country's Thanksgiving days: may they continue long after peace becomes our sweetest reality.

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Her Tenth Anniversary

Wearily, Jane Barton closed the oven door softly and sat down on a high red stool near it. Only a few more minutes and the cake would be done. Chocolate cake—Bob's favorite! A tired but happy smile came over her face as she thought of Bob. Today, November the twenty-second, was their tenth anniversary—it seemed impossible that they had been married ten years and had two children as large as Bobby and Judy.

Mrs. Barton was sinking quickly into a rosy remembrance of their other anniversaries when suddenly she brought herself to with a start. No time for memories now; Mother Barton was coming over and they were going to have a little celebration, as they had for the past two years. Bob would be thinking of them, she knew, and he would be a very vivid presence in everyone's mind. Anyway, Mother Barton was probably on her way already; so Jane reached over to open the oven door.

Just as she was peering in at her masterpiece, a sharp knock sounded at the front door. Giving the cake a last approving glance, she went swiftly to the door, prepared to greet her mother-in-law. With a cheerful smile on her face, she started to speak. Her mouth closed, and the smile froze on her lips. Before her stood a uniformed boy holding a small yellow telegram in his hand. Automatically she took the telegram, thanked the boy, and closed the door.

The noise of the children upstairs had stopped completely. Judy's shrill scream broke the deathly silence, "Who was it, Mummy? Was it Grandma? Who was it?"

Jane pulled herself together with painful effort and answered, "What? Oh, no, Judy, it wasn't Grandmother. She'll be here in a little while. Play with your brother, dear—"

The noise of the children began again; and, at last, she opened the telegram. She read it through with a single glance and then, moving slowly and deliberately, walked over to the stairs, climbed them, and went into her bedroom. Stopping in front of a small chest, she opened it and took from it a small box. Then she turned and retraced her steps downstairs and walked blindly out of the house. As she walked out, there seemed to be a peculiar odor of food burning, but the thought did not quite penetrate her senses.

Once outside she walked swiftly as though some unseen hand guided her steps. Finally, after reaching the top of a high hill, she stopped beneath a huge apple tree, sat down, and opened the box. She took from it a letter, opened it, and quickly began to read:

"My dearest wife, Jane,

"Before you read this, look around you for a moment. Is it spring? Are the apple trees in bloom? Jane, darling, can you see our big rock over there to the left? Remember that day—the day I finally found courage to ask you if you'd be Mrs. Bob Barton and you burst out crying? I was scared stiff—I thought you meant you wouldn't and hated to tell me. Then you said, half between a laugh and a sob, 'Of course, I will, you big dope—I thought you'd never ask me!' I could have cried then myself—I wanted to jump up, run around and shout. What would you have thought, Jane, if I had started turning cart-wheels down the hill?

"Well, at the most you couldn't have laughed any more than I did the day you put sugar in the biscuits instead of flour. Remember, Jane? I came home from the office and you weren't at the door to meet me. (By the way, you shouldn't have done that. All sorts of terrible things came into my mind. After only a month of marriage it was a minor tragedy not to have you waiting for me.) I was really worried when I walked in the kitchen—

and there you were, standing in the middle of the floor with a great big smudge of something sticky on your face and with a little chin that quivered dangerously and eyes a little too bright.

"I hastily asked what was wrong and you said, in a mournful wail, 'Bob, the sugar got in the flour's place and I ruined your biscuits!' Darling, you never did understand exactly why I let out a crazy whoop of joy and took you in my arms, did you? I'll tell you why, now. Remember, you said '. . . and I ruined *your* biscuits'? Even in that terrible moment of failure, dear, you were thinking of me.

"Jane, there's no need to ramble on. I know you remember every little moment just as I do. I tip-toed across the hall just now and peeped in on you. You were sleeping peacefully with a quiet smile on your face. I'll always take that picture of you with me, dearest, wherever I go, because that smile is typical of you. I know you dread tomorrow just as much as I do. These three weeks have been the most perfect weeks of my life—being here with you, Judy, and Bobby. Still, although you'll be sad tomorrow, you'll still smile for me, won't you, Jane? I'll bet you have that smile on your face now. If you haven't, you're failing me, dearest; so smile for me, will you?

"Jane, I know what it means if you're reading this letter, and I want to say just one thing more—don't forget the times we've had, some happy, some sad. No, Jane, don't forget these, for they are to be cherished; but also, don't live in the past, darling. Just because I'm not there with you now, don't go backward and live in the days when I was there, but go forward bravely and cheerfully into the future. If you must, take our memories out, dear, but do it openly and freely—not in a morbid, sad way, because they are, on a whole, happy memories, you know.

"Darling, you're young. Don't grieve for me, because you know what I've always said about that. Accept the fact with a smile that I'm away; then get up and face the world.

"I bequeath to you not only our two sweet kids, but a place for them in a free world—notice that, Jane; world, not just one country. Bring them up to be loyal Americans, by all means; but never let them forget, as so many of us did, that our country is one of a family of nations. And give each a kiss for me—

"Lastly, Jane, never doubt that my love will live on and on. Remember always:

> . . . I love thee with the breath
> Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
> I shall but love thee better after death.

Your husband,
Bob."

ANNAIONETTE BOBBITT

The River

Silently, calmly, the river sped on
Like black cat slinking down dark alleys,
Gurgled its lullaby past hushed houses
And coyly rippled at spellbound lovers,
Proudly swept by diminutive creeks
To lose itself in limitless ocean.

ANN TYSOR

The Visit

Nan watched Pop sip his coffee from a thin china cup, Wedgwood. Ordinarily the Wedgwood remained in the mahogany cabinet, exempt from everyday living, but things had been a bit topsy-turvy for the past week. Nan liked the Wedgwood. It had been her mother's. Pop said it would belong to her some day, when she grew up. That was a long time off; Nan was only ten.

Pop put his coffee down abruptly and folded his newspaper. "I'm going to sell King. Rob Butler is looking for a good horse. Said King appealed to him. King has spirit. He's coming out this morning to look him over."

"Pop, oh, Pop, you *can't* sell King. Please, Pop. Ben wanted King so much. And I—I promised him I'd look after him." Nan blinked her eyelashes to dispel the tears. Her masculine upbringing had given her a natural abhorrence of tears. A week ago she had gazed dry-eyed at her twin, swathed in antiseptic, cotton, and gauze. His hair, more blond than hers, had been hidden, and his blue eyes had been slits. He had whispered, "It's all right, Nan. King didn't mean to do it. Don't let Pop fuss at him." That was all.

Pop hadn't fussed; he hadn't done much of anything but shake hands with people who came in endless lines. Once he shut the door to his den and stayed a long time. When Nan went in to call him for dinner she saw beside the quaint miniature of her mother another picture in a leather frame. It was a snap of Ben and Pop, taken on a huge rock in the creek. Nan began to grow up then. She smiled at Pop, and he smiled back. It was a gentle smile—not like Pop's customary grin. It was as though Pop had put into that leather frame himself, the part of him that loved snow, cotton candy, swimming, plaid ties, and Ben. Nan felt alone. First Ben and now Pop. Both of them just a piece of paper in a leather frame. But she hadn't cried even then.

And she didn't cry now. She just looked at Pop. So Pop said, "Well, all right. We'll keep King a while. But, Nan—" he lit a cigarette, "you're not to ride him." Then he went to the office.

Nan decided to walk down to the creek. She and Ben had named it "Our Heaven" to distinguish it from Mom's and God's heaven. The immense gray rocks formed a trail down the center of the creek. Even in late fall the sun warmed the rocks so they were comfortable to sit on. There was one rock, bigger than the rest, with a little niche for shoes and stockings in wading season. Blackberries grew along the bank in hedgelike thickness. Above the rocks there was a calm pool where water lilies furnished bouquets for Ben and Nan when they had a yen for romantic skits.

This morning Nan picked her way along the rocks to the one with the shoes-and-socks depository. She pulled off her sandals and dabbled her toes in the creek. The cool water felt good. A school of minnows darted around her ankles in the shadow of the rock. She flirted with them outrageously until the sun made her drowsy. She wished for Ben. He could always think of things to do—different things. He knew about bugs and birds and fairies. Her own knowledge was more accurate but not half so extensive or interesting as Ben's. There really was nothing to do; so Nan closed her eyes and day dreamed. Some day she'd grow up and Pop would give her the Wedgwood to put in the little house she and Ben were going to build. But, no, she remembered then that Ben wouldn't be there. Well, anyway, she'd have the Wedgwood and a dog, a collie maybe (Ben liked them best), and King. She would take good care of King. It would please Ben, and she liked Ben to be pleased. He always smiled and tossed his blond hair out of his eyes when he liked something.

Quite suddenly Nan realized for the first time that Ben was gone. He couldn't come back to tell her how he wanted things looked after, to finish his talk about the queen fairy, to tell

her he thought she was swell. He was gone and he wasn't coming back. Until that moment Nan had believed, way back in a dark little cubby-hole of her mind, that Ben was just away for a long time, that he'd grow up, perhaps in heaven; but always, there in that dark little cubby-hole, she had comforted herself with the belief that his absence was only temporary, something to be endured for the present only. She almost cried. Then she thought, "Maybe Ben can see me. Heaven must be a grandstand seat." She didn't cry.

When she opened her eyes there was a mist over the creek. It was heaviest beyond the rocks over the lily pool. Someone was up there, hidden in the mist, splashing in the water and whistling. Nan's little ten-year-old heart began to pound furiously. Ben whistled like that. She stood up on the rock and peered into the mist. She could see someone hopping from rock to rock. That someone had a sturdy frame and blond hair and blue eyes. It was Ben.

"They told me you were dead," Nan laughed in delight when she hugged him. "Oh, Ben, where have you been?"

"In heaven. I *am* dead, Nan."

"Dead? You can't be, Ben. You're right here with me."

"I know it, but I'm dead all the same." He sat down on the rock beside her and dabbled his feet in the water too. He pulled her pigtail gently. "You see, Nan," he went on with a masculine superiority, "it's like this. All this week I watched you, and you seemed sort of lost without me; so I had a little talk with God."

"A little talk with God! Ben, don't fool."

"I'm not fooling. Like I said, we had a little talk, and I told Him all about how you're scared of snakes and how you don't like to go to the store by yourself and how you just sort of need a man to help you out. He agreed with me, but He said you had to learn to get along by yourself. I said I thought so too, so—"

Nan exploded. "It isn't nice to talk about me to other people."

"All right, Nan," Ben condescended. "So God said, 'Suppose you make a little trip to earth tomorrow and talk to Nan.' So here I am. Aren't you glad to see me?"

"Of course I am." Nan was awed. "How long can you—er—stay?"

"Oh, till dinner time. Something like that. Nan, I heard you talk to Dad about King this morning. Thanks. Take good care of him."

Nan pulled her legs up from the water and clasped her hands around her knees. She began to appreciate the unique circumstances of this chat. "Ben, what's heaven like?"

"Oh, it's nice." He rubbed his arm across his forehead. "I can't tell you exactly. You don't ever get tired. There's always something to do. You hear music, lots of it. When I left someone was playing 'Humoresque.' Don't you like that, Nan?"

"Yes, it always makes me feel good."

"Me too. Mom likes it too. That's right, Nan, I met Mom. She wanted to come with me because she hasn't seen you since you were a tiny baby, but God needed her to help Him today. She wants you to cheer Pop up. She's sort of worried about him, in your language, but she's not really worried because she knows he is going to be all right in the end."

"What can I do? It's all your fault. Taking that high hurdle! Why did you do it?"

"I'm sorry, Sis. But it looked so, so—well, like a cinch." He grinned at the memory.

"What's Mom like, Ben?" Nan sounded wistful.

"Just like that picture on Pop's desk. Only better. You'll like her, Nan."

"I'll like her? When will I have the chance?"

"Oh, you'll come to see us some day," Ben retorted airily. "You know, everyone does eventually. Mom and I are looking forward to showing you and Pop around when you come

up. But we want you to have a good time down here until you do." Suddenly Ben was serious. "You know, Sis, I talked to two fellows not long ago—Paul and a fellow named Drummond. They helped me get it straight."

"Get what straight?" Nan wanted to know.

"What I'm going to tell you, silly. They explained it to me like this." Ben frowned in concentration. "Down here people are supposed to learn how to love other people so they'll fit in with the way heaven is run. It doesn't matter whether they all love you back or not, just so *you* learn how. And loving people is a lot of fun. It's the only law we have in heaven. I guess you don't understand exactly; you never were very smart in arithmetic, but all you have to do is love. Don't worry about why. Just go ahead and do it. You'll understand some day."

Then he grinned, and Nan was happy. They went up into the woods gossiping happily about who could catch the biggest fish. When they were tired, they lay down in a cool spot where the grass was tender and edible. They went to sleep, Ben's hand clasped in Nan's.

When Nan awoke, she was alone. That is, she didn't see Ben anywhere. Ben had left her again. But she was light-hearted, for she had a part of Ben to go with her everywhere —a way of living, his dreams of a better world; and the spirit of her twin, inseparable from her in death as in life, trudged sturdily beside her as she turned her steps homeward.

ELEANOR CRAIG

Bridgeport Interlude

On my way to New York this past August, I had to catch a train from Bridgeport, Connecticut. As my parents and sister were along, too, there was quite a collection of luggage. When we got out of our cab at Bridgeport's railroad station, I stood on the walk and madly caught pieces of luggage and flung them to the porter back of me, while my father went on ahead to buy our tickets.

We didn't have much time to spare, and I was excitedly flinging suitcases to all and sundry in an unsuccessful attempt to speed up matters. In one of these frantic tosses, I threw a bag in the wrong direction to a strange man who made a neat catch and stood calmly watching me confuse matters. I curtly asked him to give the bag to the porter, and when he did so I got a closer look at him. Much to my amazement and chagrin, I discovered the accommodating stranger to be Vice-President Wallace!

JEANNE SUESSMUTH

Alias Pleasure

In Chapel Hill last summer, I went with a friend of mine, with whom I was spending the week-end, to a garden party. The afternoon was warm and my clothes felt sticky and uncomfortable as I found myself in a room where a group of pale, perspiring, and frankly miserable people were filing sadly down the receiving line. I noted an air of forced geniality as different guests commented on its being such a "wonderful day for a party," or on the fact that it was "grand to see so many old friends." I passed out to the veranda for refreshments and then out into the open air. The garden was overflowing with people and there was a "din of doubtful talk," as Rossetti says. As I joined group after group in which the conversation was of the same easy, innocuous character, the sun beat down on my streaming brow until I felt sick and faint. I got away—dizzy, unstrung, unfit for life, with a sense of fatigue that comes only from standing in hot, buzzing places. As I left, I pondered sadly on the inconceivable nature of the motive that would drive people to behave as I had seen them behaving, suffer as I had seen them suffering, and resolutely call it "pleasure"!

MARGARET MARLEY

Without a Song

Fall was in the air and the heralds of winter sounded forth in various ways. The air was crisp. The days were not filled with soft warm sunshine; and though not dreary, they were hard and tense with expectancy. The multicolored flowers of summertime were fast dying away as if they wished to be gone before the impending gloom became a reality.

I knew that something in the air was different, but I did not think about it—and knew not whether it foreboded good or evil. Ever since I could remember, I had been happy—happy in my own little world consisting of Mother, Father—and Paris. For some time now I had been burdened with heavier and more sober thoughts than ever before. I loved Paris with all my heart and she was not free. The heart of this gay yet sedate, incomprehensible yet lovable, altogether beautiful city was under the heel of the conqueror and I was most miserable. Everywhere one saw evidences of the Germans; their uniformed guards were placed throughout the city and their flags had waved in the breezes for many months. As the heart of Paris beat, so beat that of my father. Always he became aroused at the sight of the Germans, angry when he saw what was happening to the bodies, minds, and spirits of his countrymen, and furious when the Nazis disregarded or ridiculed French petitions and manifestations of French patriotism. I am sure he could have made quite a few bold and impassioned speeches; but always my mother whispered, "La parole est d'argent, mais le silence est d'or, papa."

Thus we lived on through autumn—living each day as it came, not knowing what the future held and not daring to guess. Though I did not know how my family and friends felt at that time or even what they were doing through those frost-bitten days, I did know that there was an atmosphere of mystery surrounding my world. Many were the times when I lay on my bed in the early morning hours unable to sleep and heard my father come in and go to bed. Once we were eating our meager supper—as much as our "lords" chose to ration us—by the stove in the comfortable kitchen, when suddenly the radio blast forth a warning to all "uncoöperative French" and then told the news of several Frenchmen condemned to die as spies and traitors. My parents exchanged looks of anguish and my father tremblingly declared, "They may kill our bodies, but our spirit will always live!"

How little did I know about what went on under my very nose! But to live in ignorance then was not to live in bliss, for I remember well how my mother was in a constant state of nervousness and worry, how relieved she was whenever mon père came in at night tired and pale. Then shall I never forget—my heart turns cold now at the very thought—the day when very early in the morning two men knocked at our door and were let in by my quite puzzled mother. They were men rather familiar to me, for they had come home with Father several times. They quietly told us that Father would never come home again. Mother took me in her arms and whispered over and over, "We will never see him again." Though Mother was stunned and cut to the heart, she was braver than I ever imagined anyone could be.

After Messieurs Corday and Dumoulin had told us about the raid of the underground meeting and murmured their condolences, they left. That day Mother and I walked through

the streets of Paris, the parks, the lanes; and I told her that my heart would forevermore be without a song. I remember clearly what she said then—very simple words, but of great inspiration to me.

"Sorrow must come to everyone. We feel it has come to us exceptionally hard, but always have a song in your heart and on your lips! Remember your father, cherish his ideals, love France; and go on living, making life worth while for others and for yourself."

In a short while we moved from Paris—as much as we hated to leave it—to another part of France in a smaller town. There, living with my grandparents, we passed our days very quietly. Nothing of real importance happened until the night of the air raid. Planes came over in swarms; and though we heard the shrill siren, we heard it too late. I cannot—cannot describe that terrifying bombing, that nightmarish experience, for I was unconscious most of that night; what little I do remember is too ghastly to relate. I did not know how seriously I was hurt nor did anyone else, but I could not walk. Mother could find no doctor to help me, and that is why she brought me to England—a very exciting trip which would have been impossible without the aid of our friends in the French Underground.

I did not think I would like England, but I love it. I want to see it all some day, for really I have seen very little—just glimpses of London as we rode to the hospital. Lying in bed all day long for many weeks was not fun, but I managed to enjoy it as I grew to know the nurses and doctors passing up and down the ward. To be waited on for every little thing made me feel quite helpless, but everyone was so kind to me that I did not think about being really hurt. Then one day I discovered that the doctor believed I would never walk again. I do not know exactly when I realized it, but somehow I just felt it and knew it was true.

The next thing of importance happened in a strange way. I was lying very still one day thinking over the many thoughts in my mind of late. My eyes passed along the floor and suddenly stopped. There was a newspaper, its big black headlines screaming at me. Part of it was folded under and all I could see was "—RIS LIBERATED."

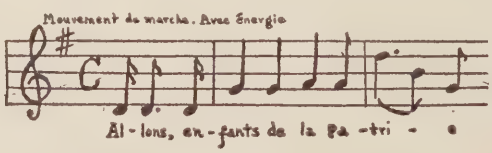
My heart was in my mouth, my whole body trembled—could it be Paris? Oh dear God, let it be Paris! Paris, the city I loved, the city my father died for. I had to see it—but they said I could not walk. I had to; I *must*. Slowly I slid to the edge of the bed, swung my feet out—oh, could I go on? Of course, I must. My feet touched the floor for the first time in months. Gripping the bedpost so tightly the color went out of my hand, I took one step, then two. But I could not take my hand from the bed!

I looked at the newspaper—I had to see it. I took my hand off and stood alone. Falteringly I wabbled to the other side of the room and when I was halfway across, fell on my knees. By now my determination was stronger than ever; I forced myself up again.

On, on, and after what seemed eternity—I reached the paper. Trembling violently, I picked it up, read it—"PARIS LIBERATED." I sank down; but as I fell, I heard faraway strains of "La Marseillaise," and automatically my lips began moving to those soul-stirring words "Allons, enfants de la patrie . . ."

I had found my song again.

RUTH HUNT HARPER



Stifle That Yawn!

You think the preacher's only agony as he faces his congregation each Sunday morning is the worry of whether or not he is going to get around to his "thirdly" before Deacon Brown puts on that "I'm hungry" look, or whether or not he looked too directly at Mrs. Jones when he flung out that accusation. If you should ask him the cause of his distress, he'd probably mention something else.

If only the congregation would remember that the poor parson has to stand up there and look at it for an hour, perhaps it could arrange for him to have a more satisfying object to cast his eye upon. Usually the pastor's flock behaves fairly well until the sermon starts. Of course a few of the "sheep" have trouble getting their hands on their tithes. The men squirm and dig fruitlessly in their pockets until they either ram their fists through the hole or realize they are in the wrong pants; the women screw around and at last locate their offering in the disgorged contents of their pocketbooks. Really, though, their conduct is praiseworthy up to the point where the minister steps forward, sends his Adam's apple bobbing up and down a couple of times, and speaks.

A voice like his is not comparable to a lullaby; but regardless of whether or not the cause is similar, the effect is the same. On the back row of the choir the bass soloist passes immediately into oblivion. There he will sit, bolt upright like a miniature sphinx, until the first notes of the last hymn lift his heavy lids. The most active member of the Ladies' Aid must have been out aiding late last night, for she has her head comfortably resting on her three chins, one eye already shut. No point to using that illustration you selected just for her, Reverend; you'll have to save it a few more Sundays. And then there's one member who would be at a loss if the church were filled to capacity—it's that fellow who must have plenty of room before he can absorb the sermon. He absorbs the pew, too. One leg goes west, one arm east, and his thoughts out the nearest window.

Then there are the in-betweeners. In the middle section Mrs. Smith is busy at her regular Sunday morning routine—a yawn, two blinks, a nod, a jerk back to consciousness, and so on, *ad infinitum*. Mrs. Taylor refuses to agree with Mrs. Smith on anything; so she carries on the same routine—but in reverse order.

Certainly the minister is bald; he tore out his scanty allotment of hair years ago. What else could he do, when the town's most respectable citizens practiced their "uprightness" on him every Sunday only by *sleeping* upright through his sermons! CAROLYN NEEL

Canterbury Tales, Senior Style

When that the teacher with her speeches sour
The fear of failure hath planted every hour,
And leveled victims to a lowly state,
Nor from her torture does one whit abate;
When language queer of dear old Chaucer's time
Inspired hath in every student's mind
The tender seedling of a class revolt,
Its frank and earnest object being to bolt
The small, foul tests that catch us by surprise
(The day before we'd slept with open eyes
Or sweetly dreamed along one folded arm):
Then long we lasses to keep ourselves from harm,
And how we wish we knew the strange translations
(At least enough to pass examinations);
And specially ere next report cards strike
To raise our grades to 70 we'd like—
Else sweet parental praises soon may cease,
That showered us before Jeff Chaucer and Peace.

DOROTHY SWAIN

Postscript

'Tis true, how true! that girls' pre-Chaucer days
In course of time become the Chaucer phase,
To baffle so completely with its maze
That victims even hail post-Chaucer daze!

MISS HORNE

Your Life Is Your Ship

Your life is your ship:
God built it just for you;
Upon your ship you stand,
And you are in command.

The course you set
Is wholly up to you:
Your thoughts will guide your way
To swamping seas or bay.

A log will you keep
Of every voyage you make;
Will it clearly show
Progress—yes or no?

Your life is your ship:
You're launched and on your way.
Ask God to be your Light
Through darkest, war-torn night.

RACHEL ALLEN

All for Nancy

The early morning sun shone through burnished leaves on a cute turned up nose and a twisted mane of honey-blond hair. Nancy opened her eyes slowly, yawned, sighed rapturously and slid another half-inch under the covers. "I don't believe it," she whispered; "I just don't believe it. Johnny's coming home tomorrow. Oh golly, it's just too good to be true."

"Huh?" questioned little sister Jo from her resting place under the pillow.

"Nothing," returned Nancy. "Go back to sleep, infant, you wouldn't understand. But do drag your head out from under the feathers before you suffocate."

"I do wish," she continued softly, "Fate or somebody would help me pick out the right one. Johnny's wonderful, but then, so is Bill. Mmmmm." She closed her eyes for a moment in blissful reverie.

"Nancy! Josephine! Time to get up," interrupted a masculine voice from the foot of the stairs.

"All right, Daddy, I'm up!" yelled Jo in response.

"You *look* like you're up, Josephine Taylor," exclaimed Nancy.

"Well, I am up . . . upstairs!" remarked Josie sweetly as she ducked a well-aimed pillow.

About five o'clock that afternoon, Nancy slid the last pan of oatmeal cookies—mysteriously half empty because of the numberless times Josie's spoon had dipped unseen in the mixture—into the oven and glanced at her watch. "Don't let me forget to take them out in ten minutes, Jo. They've gotta be perfect for Johnny."

"Okay. Providing I don't forget 'em myself," promised Josie between spoon licks.

"Say, why do you keep licking that spoon?"

". . . Uh . . . that is . . . always did like the taste of a silver spoon, didn't you?"

"Josie! Is that what happened to that half a pan of cookie dough?"

"Why, I . . ."

Only fate saved Jo's pigtails. Mrs. Taylor called from the front porch, "Nancy! The Western Union boy's here with a wire for you. Better come see what it is."

Nancy flew to the porch, scared stiff that it would be a canceled furlough message from Johnny.

She slit the envelope, scanned the page quickly and yelled "It's from Bill! It's from Bill! He's got a leave. See . . . it says:

SURPRISE WEEK END PASS COMING UP SEE
YOU TOMORROW AROUND FOUR

LOVE
BILL"

Ecstatically she exclaimed, "Oh, isn't that wonderful!" and then dolefully, "Oh, oh golly. I forgot. Johnny's coming too. Oh, mother, what will I do? They're the only two boys I've ever really cared anything about and now they'll both hate me!"

"How about Jerry and Tony and Al?" asked Jo in a dulcet voice.

"Oh, they didn't count at all—that was ages ago. . . . Oh, my Jerusalem, Johnny said he'd be over by three-thirty and Bill says he'll get here by four. They'll probably fight each other or something and then walk off and never speak to me again!"

At this agonizing thought, the tears began to flow and Nancy sobbed on her mother's shoulder.

"Johnny's in the Army Air Corps too, and he doesn't know anything else exists," she wailed, "and naturally, Bill thinks the same thing about the Navy. Oh, Mother, you know they'll fight! Why did they have to get leaves the same week-end?"

Mrs. Taylor's only reply was, "Don't worry, dear. Josie, I smell something burning. Go see what it is."

Friday dawned bright and clear. Nancy walked around all morning in what amounted to a trance with every couple of fingers crossed.

Three-thirty arrived; and so did Johnny, with a bang and a bear hug and a "Hi there, Nancy! Gee, little girl, how you've grown! Golly, it's wonderful to be home again, and look at you and eat apple pie" et cetera, et cetera.

Nancy uncrossed her fingers, lifted her blonde head, and rose to the occasion. She succeeded also, without arousing too much suspicion, in keeping Johnny's back toward the front door and herself in full view of both door and windows.

Conversation proceeded very well till Nancy glanced out the front window and swallowed convulsively. The quick glance had revealed a long leg, draped in white and sporting a well shined shoe on the foot marching up her walk. She didn't bother to see what it was attached to—it could be none other than Bill.

Nancy became quite suddenly an extremely rude young lady. She interrupted Johnny's address on the thrill of skimming a P-38 over the tree tops with the declaration that she simply had to have a double chocolate milk-shake with ice cream that very minute.

"Okay," acquiesced Johnny. "Let's go get it."

"You go," she begged. "Mother doesn't feel very good and I ought to stay here."

Of course, Mrs. Taylor had to take that moment to call, "Josephine! Come help me move this chicken coop. I want to rake up the leaves around it."

Nancy gulped. Johnny raised his eyebrows and strolled out the back-door in search of a chocolate shake.

Nancy rushed to the front and almost collided with the wearer of the white uniform. "Lady," said he, "here's your laundry. Sorry it's so late this week, but you know how it is!"

She opened her mouth to say something and failed utterly. In fact, she succeeded only in holding it open, nodding numbly and accepting the package.

"Lend me strength," implored she weakly as she sank down on the sofa to await the return of Johnny and milk-shake. Both arrived in short order and Johnny embarked once more on his story of the P-38.

Just as he was describing with wild gyrations the plane in a power dive and a pull out, the door-bell rang once more.

This time, Nancy raised blue eyes briefly toward heaven, murmured, "Excuse me," and walked to the front door. It was Bill in person, looking perfectly beautiful in his whites.

Effusive greetings completed, Nancy propelled him firmly toward the kitchen where Johnny had disappeared with the milk-shake cups.

"Johnny," she said, "I want you to meet . . ." And that was as far as she got.

"Bill Sanders! You old so-and-so!" shouted Johnny.

"Well, Johnny Evans! I'll be doggoned!" responded Bill just as enthusiastically. "What in the dickens are you doing here? Great glory, man! I haven't seen you in heaven knows when!"

"This is my own hometown, son. Home on furlough. See you're in the Navy now. Some stuff. I left State just about a week after you did and jumped into the Air Corps."

Nancy stared in open-mouthed amazement. Finally she sputtered, "Why . . . you never . . . I mean . . . Bill, you never told me you went to State too."

Bill clucked gently, "You never asked me, honey chile."

And Johnny laughed, "You—Miss Taylor—trying to introduce two guys that lived practically across the hall from each other two solid years. We who used to beat each other up in boxing practice. Oh, murder!"

Just then, in bounced Josie bearing triumphantly a huge florist's box for Nancy. "Oh," exclaimed Nancy breathlessly, "one of you wonderful guys must have sent them!"

"Not I," spoke up Bill.

"Nor I," echoed Johnny.

Starry-eyed, Nancy gazed at a dozen dewy roses and a card which read, "Love to Nancy from Jim. Remember?"

She murmured softly, "Oh, they're from little Jimmy I met at the USO last Saturday night. Aren't they beautiful?"

"These fickle women," muttered Bill.

"Well, Bill, old boy," said Johnny, "looks like we'll have to get together for a little more boxing practice if we even expect to stay in the running. I only hope precious 'little Jimmy' doesn't find out about my famous left uppercut."

But Nancy didn't look a bit worried because, to tell the truth, she didn't even hear him.

MARTHA JANE PEARSALL

I Am Percy

To begin with, I will introduce myself. I'm Percy. I realize that it's a simple name; but then, I'm a simple person. My residence is here at Peace and each year I love it more. I've lived here quite a while; in fact, I remember when Miss McLelland came and when Dr. Pressly became president. Each year I meet just lots of girls—some gentlemen too—sh! With the arrival of that green crop of new girls I'm always on hand to hear those moans and groans which eventually change to happy, "Peace"ful sighs.

You know, few people are aware that I reside at Peace; but perhaps they wouldn't like me if they knew I live here. They would only think me a "dull individual." Maybe so, but I rather like this existence. I seldom ever become lonely; and on rare occasions when I do, I take my girl friend for a swim. When hungry, sometimes we resort to our cannibalistic tastes and devour smaller members of our species.

O my! Look how much I talked—I really do feel sorry for you poor readers. If ever you want some silent friend to listen to your woes, just come to the edge of the fountain and call "Per-cee!" Then I, Percy the Paramecium, will come. Well, I have some conjugating to do. Bye!

JOYCE JONES

Silver

Slowly, silently over the hill
The cold moon rose, frosty and still;
And as it rose it shed soft light
Upon a sleeping world and night.
It shed its glory on the trees,
The sleeping birds and fallen leaves;
As drifting mist took up the light
Of weird illumined breathless night,
Then all the world to silver turned,
Transformed by moon that whitely burned.

MARGARET BROOKS

Magic

Night to me is Aladdin's carpet:
It transports me to far-off scenes,
Or brings me close to those I love
And makes so real my lonely dreams.

BARBARA DANTZLER